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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001846

SIPDIS

OSD FOR DASD IAN BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/15/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [NL](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: DUTCH CONCERNS ABOUT FURTHER FRANCO-GERMAN EFFORTS
ON MINI-SUMMIT AGENDA

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRS DANNY R. RUSSEL FOR REASO
NS 1.5 (B AND D).

(A/S Beth Jones has cleared this cable.)

11. (C) Summary: In July 15 conversations with visiting Assistant Secretary Jones and the Ambassador, senior Dutch officials expressed concerns about Franco-German efforts to take concrete steps to implement decisions from the April 29 "Mini-Summit," especially the establishment of a distinct EU military headquarters at Tervuren, Belgium. The PM's foreign policy advisor shared his broader concern about German-French efforts to woo the UK (exploiting the pressures currently on Blair) and to pull other Europeans into their orbit. While there appear to be differences within the Dutch foreign policy team as to how real a threat this is, they agree the idea is moving ahead, and urge a nuanced U.S. response so as not to "corner" the proponents and thus give impetus to their plans. End Summary.

12. (C) In a July 15 meeting with the Ambassador, PM Balkenende's Foreign Policy Advisor Rob Swartbol (protect) raised concerns that the France/Germany/Belgium/Luxembourg April 29 Mini-Summit agenda, in particular, the idea of a separate EU military headquarters, was gaining ground within some European governments. Swartbol said the EU's mission in Congo had lent momentum to the idea and suggested that a recent French, German and UK political directors meeting in Paris was aimed at getting the British onboard. He asserted there was also a serious European effort to support the broader German-French agenda. The EU headquarters idea is just one example. Swartbol suggested several streams were feeding the initiative. First, many in Europe were anxious to heal the rifts after Iraq and thus want to come together on a major foreign policy issue. Others are motivated by resentments against the U.S. In any event, France and Germany are forming a rallying point for Europe that could gain momentum and should not be ignored by the U.S.

13. (C) Swartbol again raised this issue at a luncheon for visiting Assistant Secretary Jones on July 15. MFA Deputy Political Director Herman Schaper (protect) said the Tervuren headquarters idea would not evolve into a "European SHAPE" since too many countries (including the Netherlands) oppose it. He thought it would instead become like the Eurocorps, i.e., another element in the tool box of the European allies. A/S Jones said the U.S. had been concerned that Prague Summit decisions and Berlin Plus were being undercut by the April 29 Mini-Summit. Schaper said the German Chancellor's office had been putting pressure on the Netherlands to join the project, claiming that the UK was now more supportive. His suggested approach was to avoid dramatizing French-German efforts, and said there would never be consensus for an ESDP based on distancing Europe from the U.S. MFA Director for Security Policy Maurits Jochems (protect) suggested that the U.S. reach out to the French and German defense ministries, which oppose the Tervuren idea.

14. (C) Comment: Dutch concern about the potential for Franco-German efforts to create rifts within Europe and across the Atlantic prompted the cautionary note to be sounded by the PM's Foreign Policy Advisor. He is clearly of the view that, while the U.S. should not resist European integration, Washington needs to be aware and careful of Paris-Berlin initiatives. However, all agreed that heavy-handed U.S. objections to the proposal would likely have the opposite effect and result in the Franco-German proposal gaining more European support. End Comment.
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